

Ecumenical Worship Planned

An ecumenical Service of Worship Through Music will be presented on Sunday, April 27 at 8 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo Church.

Father L. John Hedges, pastor and Rev. Mr. Hugh D. Outterson of Bethany Presbyterian Church will preside at the service which will include hymns, scripture readings, prayers and a special



The Greece Choral Society

presentation of the Gounod Messe Solennelle. The 65-piece Greece Symphony Orchestra, directed by Dr. David Fetler, and the 110-voice Greece Choral Society, directed by Ralph

Zecchino, a member of St. Charles, will present this outstanding work, which is better known as the Saint Cecilia Mass. Guest soloists from the Rochester area will be featured: Mrs. Celina Lindsley Cornett, soprano;

Michael Crouse, tenor; and James Hudson, bass.

general public.

Members of all churches are invited to this service, and a special invitation is extended to other choir members and the

St. Charles will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary this year, and the ecumenical event will introduce the anniversary observance.

Studies Reflect More Dynamic, Less Dogmatic Church

Msgr. William M. Roche, pastor of St. Catherine's Church in Ithaca, recently spent some time studying at a Theological Institute for priests at the North American College in Rome. Following are some of his reflections on that study.

by Msgr. William M. Roche

The program of the Theological Institute attempts to create an attitude of mind in those who attend; to give priests an awareness of the openness in the Church today, so that they might be effective ministers.

The program is threefold: an overview of modern philosophy,

a look at what the scripture scholars are saying these days, and an overview of current writings on moral theology. I don't think I heard anything at the institute that I hadn't heard before, but it gave me the opportunity to develop a perspective about the many changes that have occurred since I was in the seminary.

The priests in the institute were from across the country, of varying backgrounds and experience. In my group of 36 the average age was 51, most were pastors. The priests were singleminded in their reason for being there: to aid in ministries back home, to make their work

with the people more effective. An advantage of the program is that it gives one a chance to think, to evaluate his own life in the light of what is happening in the world, which is the Church since they are the same people.

One really got the flavor of the dynamism that is in the Church, communicated by the people teaching in the institute. We can't be effective using solely the background we got years ago in the seminary, because the Church has gone far beyond that. One gets a sense of the questioning Church from an experience like this, rather than the dogmatic Church we've been so familiar with in years gone by.

The cataclysmic problems that face the human race can't be solved by any simple declaration of either dogmatic or moral theology. I'm not suggesting that the truths which the Church has taught in the past have changed, but that there are many more areas of awareness today. For example the Church's understanding of God and man hasn't changed, but man is becoming more aware of his responsibilities. Responsibilities toward the poor in our own and poverty stricken nations, toward the atmosphere, the planet, those who are suffering.

Since our area of awareness is global today and human needs are so extensive there is a tendency to give in to frustration and not do anything. But the Christian message it seems to me today, is to change our own lives so we don't cause others to suffer from neglect or privation and then once we've done that, the Spirit will teach us how we are to act to help with these problems.

We can't come up with preconceived notions of solution. We have to set our lives straight and the Spirit will show us which direction to go in.

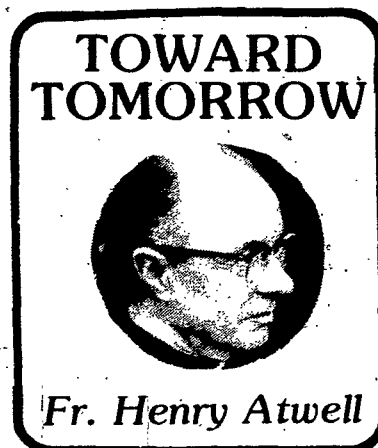
Perhaps what is most difficult for us in America to face is that the life we've grown to accept as good (the constantly increasing amounts of goods and services), is achieved only at the expense of the poor. Our failure will be a refusal to admit that a change in direction is essential. The pastor is called upon to help the people ask the proper questions.

The traditional role of priest as answer man is a role that he can no longer fulfill. The pastor is called upon to invite the people to be more scripturally aware, scripturally oriented; to see the sacraments as helps to our understanding the nature of our problems, and to look to our fellow Christians for help and support and strengthening of faith in regard to some of the difficulties. Difficulties in areas like marriage, birth control, abortion, euthanasia, world hunger.

The tendency now is to consider the uniqueness of the individual. In marriage for instance; instead of saying that those married are forever married, local bishops today are given more authority to rule on marriages so that people won't be forced to endure situations that cause acute suffering for long periods of time.

All of these problems, have to look toward the uniqueness of the individual rather than put people in pigeonholes. What

comes out of all this too is that we realize we don't understand God's law as fully as we once thought we did.



The Catholic bishops of New York State are meeting in Rochester this week.

Few of us seem likely to be affected by anything they decide or do at this meeting — which must be a frightening frustration for them.

Father Andrew Greeley, gadfly critic, in a recent article titled "The Next Ten Years," predicts that the Church as an ecclesiastical institution "will continue in the course of its precipitous decline."

Like Winston Churchill who said he didn't get himself elected to be the Queen's Prime Minister to preside over the dissolution of the British Empire, so the bishops cannot be easy in their awareness that the kingdom of God over which they preside seems to be eroding away at their fingertips.

Father Greeley assesses the cause of the ailment as "an almost total absence of ideas" at a time when we are caught between two transitions: from counter-reformation to ecumenical age, and from immigrant old neighborhood to professional class suburb. In

leaping across these two chasms, Catholics no longer listen to their Church leaders, according to Father Greeley, not because they lack faith or loyalty but quite bluntly because their leaders have nothing significant to say to them.

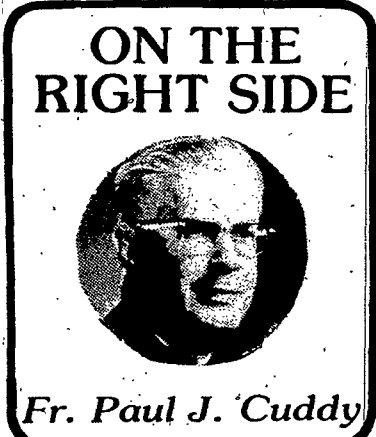
Father Greeley is invariably a bit abrasive in his analyses and particularly in this article he is much too unfair to put all the blame on the bishops and other Church officials.

Ever since the days of Pope Pius XI back in the 1930's — and even back in the last century with Pope Leo XIII, pope after pope, bishop after bishop and priest after priest have called for the "active participation of the laity" in the life and apostolate of the Church, which is, after all, the living Body of Christ.

Scores, even hundreds, of lay people have indeed responded and we need to compose a litany of apostolic American lay people — nationally and within our own diocese — but there still remains that sleeping giant of thousands upon thousands of believing, burdened and responsible lay people, and they are there quietly, docilely in the pews, who are vet to stir themselves to speak to the institutional Church and to speak courageously for it.

I look forward, therefore, to a great future someday for God's holy Church — truly Catholic, wholly integrated across the racial and creedal barriers of the past.

I look forward to a Church — creative, imaginative, free for all its members to speak candidly and lovingly to one another and to the world, which God so loved he gave his Son and for whose redemption that Son willing gave his life.



Have you returned from the Rome-Ireland pilgrimage, or is that coming up?

That reminds me of two relatives of mine when I was a youngster. They were lively debaters. One prize debate was this: "Whether or not Julia had been back to Ireland since the last time she went." Both pro and contra presented arguments with great conviction. To answer your question clearly: "No. We have not returned yet, because we have not gone yet. We leave May 4."

Any reason for the May date?

Yes. Plane and hotel rates rise when prime tourist season begins, which is June, July, August. Also the weather is especially good during May.

Why Rome-Ireland?

Because the combination is ideal for many people. No matter what the combination: Rome-Italy, Rome-Holy Land, Rome-Europe; the combination is good for some; not good for others. However 1975 offers so many tours because of the Holy Year, one wonders who is staying home. And the combinations are so varied, they should satisfy every one.

How did you ever get into this Tour Conducting?

It really goes back to that Avant-Gardist, my friend Father Atwell, when he was editor of the Courier. Eight years ago his editorial thrust was so leftward he invited me to write this OTRSide column which honors traditional Catholicism. As he put it with a tinge of wonder and regret: "There are some people who think as you do, and they should be represented." When the C-J

began to sponsor a tour to the Holy Land in March 1972, general manager of the C-J, Anthony Costello, invited me to be the tour conductor "TC" is an elegant title for Baggage Master and Worry Wart, for coordination of planes, bus and hotel movements; and a focal person for information and emergencies. One of the best things about Tours is a kind of camaraderie which builds up among strangers who are thrown together, and share common experiences. In fact in October a fine couple who met on the May tour to Ireland phoned that they had just gotten married, and are very happy. This warmed my heart.

With inflation and recession, don't you think travel should be discouraged?

No. Think of the people who would be out of work, excepting for tourism clerks, waiters, mechanics, pilots, hostesses, cleaning personnel, porters, etc.

Why do you keep going back to Ireland?

Rome is obvious because of the Holy Year, and because Rome is unique: religiously, historically, artistically, humanly. But Ireland? 1) The Irish people have a great combination of humor, Faith and an unpredictable inconsistency which make them a fascinating people. People are comfortable with them. 2) We share a common language. 3) The country is beautiful, and many people have sentimental roots in the country. 4) Shoppers can sate their souls with Waterford glass, linens, knit goods, beverages, etc. 5) The Faith of the people is still an edification. The pubs are an education. Ireland has a special fascination for the non-Irish. Philip Green, composer of the Mass of St. Francis which is sung and recorded in Cork by 110 little children, is an Englishman. He became so enthralled by the country that he embraced the Catholic faith and became a citizen of Ireland. For myself, I am still hoping to get the Archbishop Sheen taped conferences on the Irish radio. The Irish radio and TV is not over-sympathetic toward the Church. One couple, Mr. and Mrs. Steve Riley of Rochester, will be making their fourth consecutive C-J tour to Ireland this May, and say: "Every time has been as wonderful as the last time." They know how to travel.



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